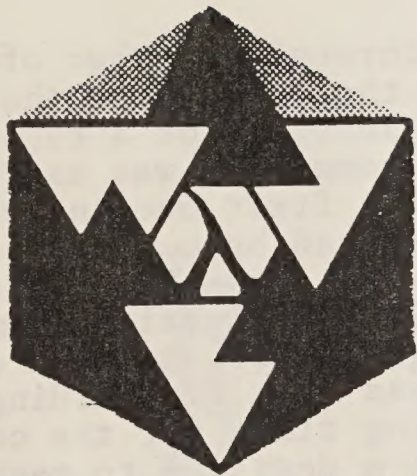


THE JEWISH GAILY



SHA'AR ZAHAV

FORWARD

שער זהב

AN ACT OF FAITH

Joining a congregation is an act of faith. We say, we are Jews, we want to pray and associate with our fellow Jews, we are not shirkers, we are responsible citizens; we want the radiance of our historic faith to illumine our homes and bring us refinement; we are members of the household of Israel.

Responsible Jews belong to synagogues just because they are responsible Jews.

I have been stressing over the years that payment of dues is an act of faith; it is not the gas or telephone bill. We do not pay the Temple for services it renders us per kilowatt, or per call; we support the Temple because it is our religious home, our religious identification, because we believe in what it represents.

Our fretting and fussing and squabbling over dues and assessments and solicitations would acquire a new meaning if we had some religious convictions and considered our payments to the Temple as our share of keeping the congregation in a position where it may do the work for which it was founded.

Rabbi Beryl D. Cohon

771 W 5739 FEB 1979



Our congregation has gone through a number of growing pains in the last year. One of these has been the question of whether we should engage the services of a rabbi. To discuss this question an ad hoc committee was established by the Va'ad a few weeks ago. Its first meeting was held after services on January 5th, as had been announced in the previous edition of the Forward. Sam T. and Penny D. were elected co-chairs of the "Rabbi Selection Committee".

At the first meeting some goals were touched on, but the primary business conducted was that of deciding about satisfactory and agreeable meeting times for the committee. The first meeting concluded with a decision to meet the following Friday after services.

The meeting held on January 12th was scheduled to be brief, since its main function was to establish places and times for the interested members of the congregation to meet on a regular basis to do the work of the committee.

Instead of the business as planned, discussion turned to a more lengthy reiteration of the issues which had been raised in the previous week, and discussion of which had been intended for the meetings not connected with Friday night services.

The outcome of this meeting was likewise unexpected. Instead of agreeing to meet to discuss what the congregation might want a rabbi to do, or what the rabbi's role expectations or job description might be, the question was called (prematurely, in my opinion) as to whether we were even willing to consider having a rabbi at the present time.

So, as it now stands, the committee, having functioned for one week's time, has recommended that the congregation not pursue the selection of a rabbi at this time.

To my way of thinking, the motion to disband the committee was out of order and should have been deferred to a later date.

I propose that this matter be brought up to the membership at its congregational meeting in February.

Sam T.



Rabbi Elazar bar Abina said in Rabbi Abi's name: For 26 generations the Alef complained before G-d: I am the first of the letters yet You didn't create Your world with me! Don't worry, said G-d, the world and all its fullness

were created for the Torah alone. Tomorrow when I come to give My Torah at Sinai the first word I say will begin with you.



Alef אֵלֶף is the first letter. It has no sound. Only the sound you make when you begin to make every sound. Open your mouth and begin to make a sound. STOP! That is Alef.

It is the letter beginning the first of God's mysterious 70 names: אֵלֹהִים ELOHIM. G-d. It also begins the most



## Treasurers Report

A Harvey Milk Memorial Fund has recently been established, the funds of which to be used for a yet to be determined appropriate cause. The first contribution to this fund was made by Robert Milk, Harvey's brother with thanks from he and his wife for a beautiful and touching memorial service held at the conclusion of that tragic week.

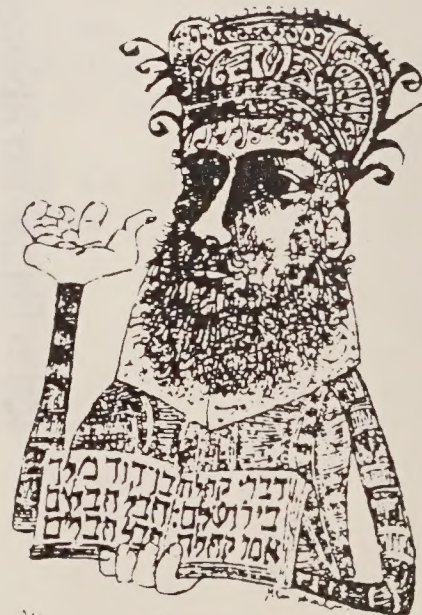
We have received many other contributions made in the memory of Harvey. These, plus your additional contributions will enable Sha'ar Zahav to have a suitable memorial to our friend and supporter of our community.

Please remember to indicate the nature of your contribution to the Synagogue i.e. "Membership Dues", the "Harvey Milk Memorial Fund" or "general contribution".

A financial statement for the period July 1 - December 31, 1978 is available for those members desiring a copy.

Shalom,  
Ron L.

דברי קהלת בן דוד מאד  
בירושלים: הבלי'ם  
אמר קהלת הבלי'ם





## purim festival

Our annual Sha'ar Zahav Purim function will be held this year Saturday evening March 10, at Dovre Hall. It is going to be a costume disco dance open for the entire community. Tickets will be available soon and Sha'ar Zahav members will be admitted at a discount. Keep this date open as it will be a fun dance. More information in the next newsletter. Contact Lauren M. so that you can help her put this together.

## oneg

The Oneg Committee, consisting of Bill G., David G. and Jordan L. met on December 10, 1978. Discussion centered on ways to make the Onegs at Sha'ar Zahav more self sustaining, and more enjoyable; and ways to involve more of the membership in the Onegs. The committee is still in need of 3 more members. If you would like to become more involved in Sha'ar Zahav and perform a much needed service to the synagogue, please see Bill Goldstein. The committee would particularly like to see some of the synagogues women become involved as all current ideas and energy input at present are from the men of the synagogue.

## donations

If you would like to donate to the congregation in honor of an event (a new residence, car, etc) or a person ( a new partner, etc) or in the memory of someone, such contribution will be graciously accepted by Sha'ar Zahav. Contribution in any amount (\$2.00 minimum) will be most welcome. If you would like your contribution not acknowledged in the FORWARD, please note that on your check.



### THE BEN EZRA SYNAGOGUE

I don't know how well known the fact is that there are something like 30 Synagogues in Cairo, Egypt, apparently all in current use. These serve about 1500 Jews still left in Cairo, in spite of the forced exodus of most of the large Jewish population at the time of President Nasser. This information was given to us by the Shamus of the oldest synagogue not just in Cairo or in Egypt, but if legend be true, on the site of probably the oldest in the World.

The site of Moses' birth, the famous bull rushes, was apparently used as the center piece of an edifice built to promote the worship of Monotheism (which language was used?). It is said that Moses did pray here, particularly on the night preceeding his awesome task of leading his people out of bondage. Parts of this building still exists in the basement of the current Ben Ezra Synagogue.

After the destruction of the first Temple by the Babylonians, some of the Jews returned to Egypt and dwelt in what is now the old city of Cairo and together with the Prophet Jeremiah resurrected Moses' Prayer House. These Jews (their descendants) remained here after the return of most of the Diaspora created by Nebucadnezer and created the Jewish community to which Joseph, Mary and their Infant Child fled, to escape Herod's wrath. In fact a Coptic Church was built at the spot where the Holy Family rested, which is right next to the Synagogue. Both exist today apparently in harmony, because of planning, the Ben Ezra in a courtyard behind the Church. Because of this it is difficult to find; however, people in the area were very freindly and helpful and we were able to locate our destination.



Once inside we were impressed as to how well kept the interior was, the Be'ma is in the center of the floor with rows of seats around it. On three sides there is a mezzanine where in true sexist tradition, the women would sit and observe the proceedings. Against the one wall is the Ark containing the sacred Torahs, of which there are several, one of which dates back to 400 years before the Christian Era. There is also a Meggilah which is about two thousand years old. Services are held every Saturday and on the High Holy Days. Unfortunately we were there during the week and were not to be in Cairo on Shabbat so we cannot describe the Service except to mention that it is a Sephardic one.

The Shamus was delightful, toothless and all, and was eager to discuss both the building and Cairo Jewery. Unfortunately there was a language problem and many of our questions were to remain unanswered, but the combination of some English, some German and some sign language, we had communication, also there is a booklet which described a part of the history of the Shul. Hopefully one day soon there will be open borders between Egypt and Israel and more research can be made on this interesting building.

Shalom,  
Don

## letters to the editor

I just received your newsletter and was so excited that I read it over 3 times. I've come to appreciate the smallest things here. I am so impressed upon all your accomplishments in just 1 year. You've truly come a long way. As you may remember I was at your first holiday services which then was just the "beginning". I hope your strength and organization will inspire the community here because as you know its another story here. Am having many wonderful experiences and think of you with love.

Elaine

ARAD, ISRAEL 7



No discussion of the history of the gay rights movement is complete without mentioning the labors of Karl Heinrich Ulrichs. A German jurist, started publishing works on homosexual rights in 1864. Keeping this in chronological perspective: the civil war was nearly over in the United States, Victoria was ruling in England, and China still had an emperor. Such an effort as Ulrich's would have been inconceivable in the America of that day.

Ulrich continued his attempts for six more years. Then worn out by his unavailing efforts to elicit any response from the German gays of that time, he went where all good Germans did at that period, Italy. He died there, largely forgotten, in 1895.

His theories read a little peculiarly today. He believed a gay man was a case of a woman's soul born into a man's body and lesbians to be vice versa. If nothing else it was a step in the right direction. Homosexuals were, therefore, no longer perverted sinners indulging in their corrupt practices out of innate depravity. While his views were primarily ignored by the legal and political establishment of his time they were paid attention by the medical one. Krafft-Ebing drew up on Ulrichs and in turn influenced Freud. The planet Uranus had been discovered relatively recently and drawing upon that plus Plato's Symposium he recommended the new word "uranian" for this newly acknowledged portion of the species. The word and its derivative "urning" were about as much of a success as the Mattachine Society's attempt at popularizing "homophile" in the 1950's. For that matter who remembers the term "the third sex" any more?

Ulrichs' work had blazed the way for Magnus Hirschfeld, who founded the first gay organization, the Scientific Humanitarian Committee in 1897. He himself acknowledged and praised the work of his predecessor. Hirschfeld was able to interest many of the foremost minds of his time, among them being Martin Buber, Kaethe Kollwitz, Tolstoi, and Thomas Mann. Other gay and lesbian groups sprang up and were established in Germany and Austria.

The Nazis, as is well known, destroyed the book collection at Hirschfeld's Institute for Sexual Science in 1933. Simultaneously, the gay men and lesbian organizations, largely inactive since World War I, came to an end. Part of the Nazi rationale seems to have been that the existence of male and female homosexuals was inimical to the nuclear family. They also used this rationale during World War II, homosexuals being the second largest minority group upon whom they bestowed their attentions. They also declared the Institute to be "un-German", an adjective constituting a death sentence for whatever it was applied to at that time. 8



Hirschfeld died in France in 1935, his work seemingly irretrievably destroyed. However, it continues to have far-reaching results to this day. It led to Havelock Ellis' Studies in the Psychology of Sex which in turn begat the epoch-making Kinsey Report. Ellis, of course, received the reward usually so generously bestowed on pioneers. When the volume Sexual Inversion was published in 1898 he was immediately prosecuted and the printer fined. Reading it nowadays is thought provoking. Comments one interviewee, echoing what others had experienced, "Until Oscar Wilde's trial I thought I was the only one of my kind." It's also interesting to learn that male homosexuals prefer green and usually can't whistle.

As a purely local by-product, Dr. Harry Benjamin, one of Hirschfeld's workers, settled in San Francisco. A wonderfully warm well-ripened person, he lectured on Hirschfeld to the Society for Individual Rights in the 1960s. An endocrinologist, Dr. Benjamin concocted the word "transsexual" to distinguish them from transvestites. He worked long and hard to improve their lot in and out of the gay community and suggested there might be a glandular basis to their condition. In doing so he was carrying out the ideals inculcated by his mentor

Jordan Lee

SARK GOULD, "The Bottle Dance from Fiddler on the Roof," 42" x 60"





## parent-child nights

As most of you know, many of our congregants are parents. It has been proposed that the parents get together to discuss the possibility that Sha'ar Zahav have a parent-child night on some sort of regular basis. Hopefully many of the parents would bring their children to services on these nights. If you are interested contact Mike Zimmerman 433-0565 (home) or 647-6344 (work), Rachel Wahba , or Ellis Jacobs 552-6976, or contact any of them at services.

## programs

The following programs have been arranged by the program committee. All programs will start at the conclusion of evening services. As is readily observable, the speakers are all well known and should be very interesting.

- February 16: Novelest & Essayist - Herbert Gold
- February 23: Rabbi Brian Lurie, Executive Director  
Jewish Welfare Federation of San Francisco,  
Marin and Peninsula.
- March 23: Earl Raab, Columnist for the Jewish  
Bulletin.
- April 6: David Goodstein, Publisher of the Advocate.

## vollyball

The Sha'ar Zahav Vollyball Team needs more players. We play every Thursday at 7:15 P.M. at Lowell High School, usually against the MCC. No expertise needed. Just bring yourself and anyone else for 45 minutes of lots of fun. For more information contact David G.

## committee date

There will be a Finance Committee Meeting at Ron's on Wednesday February 21, 1979 at 8:00 P.M. If you are interested in joining the Finance Committee please call Ron 552-6766 or Tom 775-4386.



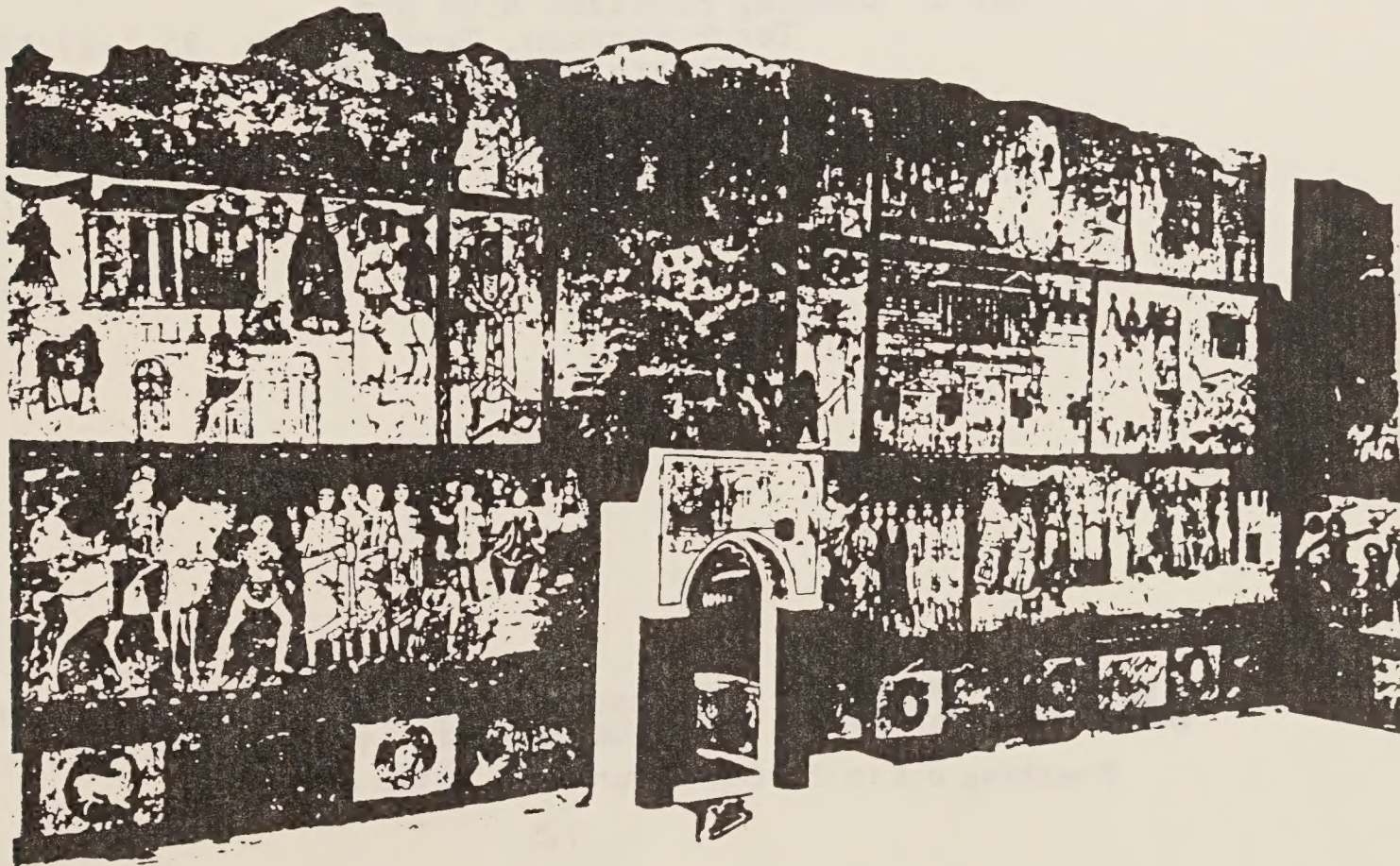
## congregation meeting

The semi-annual meeting of the congregation will be held after services on March 2, 1979.

The FORWARD needs your articles. Anybody who would like to write a periodic column or just a single article of general interest to the congregation for publication in the FORWARD, please contact me. The FORWARD and the congregation will be most appreciative.

Ellis J.

YESHIVA UNIVERSITY MUSEUM, half-scale reproduction of the fresco wall found in the ruins of Dura-Europos Synagogue is part of the permanent collection of the Museum.





## calendar of events

- Feb 2 Evening Services 8:00 p.m.  
Torah portion, Bo, Ex. 10:1-13:16.  
Prophetic reading, Jeremiah 46:13-28.
- Feb 10 Evening Services 8:00 p.m.  
Torah portion, Be Shallah, Ex. 13:17-17:16, Prophetic reading, Judges 4:4-5:31.
- Feb 16 Evening Services 8:00 p.m.  
Torah portion, Yitro, Ex. 18:1-20:23  
Prophetic reading, Isaiah 6:1-7:6, 9:5.
- Feb 23 Evening Services 8:00 p.m.  
Torah portion, Mishpatim, Ex. 21:1-24:18,  
Special reading, Ex. 30:11-16. Special  
prophetic reading, II Kings 12:1-17.
- Mar 2 Evening Services 8:00 p.m.  
Torah portion, Terumah, Ex. 25:1-27:19.  
Prophetic reading, I Kings 5:26-6:13.
- All Services at Dovre Hall, 3543 18th Street,  
San Francisco, CA.

**SNA'AR ZAHAV**

THE CONGREGATION OF Box 5640 San Francisco, Calif  
THE GOLDEN GATE Tel: 626-3131 94101.

Reaching out to the Gay Community of the Bay Area